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ABSTRACT

Analysis of the basic and alternative word order patterns of spoken and written modern Breton confirms it as a consistent VSO (verb, subject, object) language, possessing the principal operator/operand features posited for such languages, rather than having predominantly SVO word order as some recent research has suggested. However, as most contemporary, younger speakers and writers of the language learn Breton as a second rather than first language, following acquisition of French, they will either consciously adopt the rules of the more conservative Celticist writers or follow largely francophone instincts in expressing themselves in Breton, with a rise in the frequency of SVO ordering and other potential morphosyntactic changes. (MSE)

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WORD ORDER IN 20TH-CENTURY BRETON*

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This paper is an effort to shed some light on the question of what's going on with word order in modern Breton, which, as is well known, has been traditionally classified as a VSO language, in line with the other Celtic languages. Until recently the VSO interpretation had gone unchallenged; then in 1979 Amy Varin argued that contemporary Breton favors more an SVO than a VSO arrangement of constituents. Her claim was based on a variety of sources written by native Breton speakers from the 19th and early 20th century, whose style she contrasted with that of many modern writers who deliberately aim at a "purer" Celtic syntax, and whose Breton is often not native; she dubbed the former style "Traditional Breton" (TB) and the latter "Brezhoneg chimik" ('Chemical Breton', abbreviated Bch). Varin contends that Bch represents a studied effort by intellectuals to return to some putative Celtic purity of syntax, whereas "mainstream" speakers and writers of Breton have moved toward dominant SVO order.
Operating with a familiar bistratal model of language, Varin argued that this SVO order is probably in deep as well as surface structure, and that setting up underlying SVO obviates some difficulties that arise under a VSO analysis (e.g., the necessity for Topicalization to apply repeatedly in order to account for the instances of non-verb-initial sentences).

Following this lead, a few linguists seem to have accepted Varin's analysis (Raney 1984, Stump 1984). However, in my opinion, no one hitherto has examined this issue in sufficient depth to allow the drawing of any definite conclusions. Varin's own evidence for SVO hinges on a few well chosen examples from written sources stretching from the late 19th c. to the

present day. She does not provide evidence from the spoken language. Moreover, she cites many instances of VSO order in the two broad categories that she has singled out for investigation (Bch and TB) that, superficially at least, seem to weaken her case. Because the claim that Breton is an SVO language is an important one, departing as it does from the received view of general Celtic word order, it seemed to me necessary to examine this question more closely, bringing evidence to bear from at least one spoken variety of the language--in this case, Carhaisien Breton (CB), a variety that I have done a good deal of field work on over the years.[1] I have amplified my data base with samples of texts written by authors who are (or were) all 20th-century native speakers of the language. I shall get on to a discussion of the data in a moment. First, a few preliminary remarks are called for.

1) My focus will be on the surface order of constituents, the basic and alternative word order patterns that appear in transcriptions of spoken speech or in written texts. My statements, then, will refer to statistical predominance of observable patterns, which is one of the criteria that has

[1] The variety is a subdialect of Cornouaillais, one of the four major dialects of the language. Sketches of the phonology and verb morphology of CB may be found in Timm 1984 and Timm, forthc., respectively.

been suggested for determining basic word order.[2] In addition, I shall point out how word order patterns in Breton are partially a function of the conjugational mode of the verbs.

2) It needs to be pointed out that many descriptions of Breton as a VSO language obscure the fact that the verb is not usually in absolute initial position (though this fact is acknowledged by King 1981 and Stump 1984). In all varieties of Breton with which I am familiar the verb is usually preceded by a non-primary constituent such as a verbal particle, a conjunction, a negative marker, or an adverb. Moreover, because Breton is an inflecting language, the subject need not be a full NP, but may be marked only in the verbal suffix. The direct object is not, of course, obligatory with all verbs. A more detailed, and accurate, picture of Breton as a VSO language (if that's what it is) would be:

i) (X)V(S)(O), where x≠NP

These preliminaries stated, let me move on now to summarizing Varin's claims about Breton word order, comparing her findings with my data for CB. As an aside, I would like to say that after reading Varin's article, and knowing well that French has indeed exerted strong influence on Breton (elsewhere [Timm 1982] I have documented the French influence on the

[2] There is no universal agreement, far from it, on what constitutes basic word order; as has been pointed out, Greenberg's classic typological study provided no definition, and efforts since then to arrive at a suitable definition are a varied lot, involving criteria ranging from simplicity to statistical predominance to markedness to main clause vs. subordinate clause (cf. Derbyshire 1977; Keenan 1976; Hsieh 1977; Comrie 1981; Hawkins 1984). There are also explicitly theory-dependent definitions, such as Pullum's (1977), which ties basic word entirely to his version of relational grammar.

lexicon), I was prepared to find SVO sentences popping out all over; in other words, my initial suspicion in doing this study was that I would prove Varin's analyis correct.

Table 1 provides a synopsis of Varin's analysis of word; the first two columns represent word orders in Bch and TB; the third column shows CB.

[insert Table 1 here]

As can be seen, Bch is verb- initial in constructions A-J (but recall my caveat that the V may still be preceded by some element, such as the Neg marker in Category A, or a verbal particle in Category D). Her presentation of TB shows that variety to be less rigorously verb-initial--cf. categories A, and E. CB, on the other hand, differs in some notable respects from both Bch and TB.

First, regarding Category A, negatives preceded by the subject are very rare; moreover, negatives preceded by the first half of the negative circumclitic, ne, are not even preponderant--i.e., the ne is typically deleted, with the negation of the verb being marked (still more than adequately) by the second half of the circumclitic, ket, and, where applicable, by the soft mutation on the first consonant of the verb. This leaves the verb in absolute initial position:

1. /wiun kit/ 'I don't know' (Bch: n'ouzon ket)
   (know-I not)

2. /gaf ki hi:R e amzɛR/ 'he's not bored' (Bch: ne gav ket hir e amzer)
   (finds not long his time)

In a sample of 50 simple negative sentences, the ne was omitted in over 80% of them. As suggested earlier, the redundancy of the double negative markers has doubtless played a role in this streamlining.

Regarding Category E, CB does not conform to the generalization that "TB prefers to begin the reported speech with the subject" (p. 87). In fact, CB appears to have been innovative in creating the complementizer /la(R)/ in reported speech clauses that typically have the verb directly after this morpheme:[3] e.g.,

3. /kleəd møs laR wa tRao ne gãti/
(heard I-have that was things new with her)
'I heard that there were new things with her' (i.e., I heard that she was pregnant'

4. /laRd ve dĩ la zebəjñč mowədy a Režn/
(said it-is to me that eat-they blackberries and grapes)
'I am told that they eat blackberries and grapes'

My data contain numerous examples of such reported speech and other subordinate clauses following verbs of cognition having the structure shown here; I came across one example of the subject preceding the verb following this complementizer.

Categories F-J do not call for much comment, since neither TB nor CB diverges significantly from Bch in having mainly VSO order in the constructions noted. I will point out, however, that after coordinating conjunctions such as ha(g) 'and' or rak 'for, because', SVO is as allowable in Bch as it is in TB or CB; this is camouflaged by Varin's statement that "some

[3] This form, or something analogous, may occur in other vernaculars, though I have not seen referernce to it in published sources.

element" X is required before the verb. Such clauses function as independent matrix clauses and therefore may have the verb in the analytical mode, which obligatorily places the subject before the verb. I return to this point later on.

Concerning "Other Word Orders", I shall make brief observations on some of them, and dwell longer on others:

I. OVS occurs in all three varieties; Varin says that this order is marked for emphasis on the DO, with which I agree. It should be pointed out that the vast majority of such sequences in CB occurs when the verb is /kəot/ 'have', and the subject is not expressed by a full NP (i.e., it is marked semantically in the verb). Examples:

5. /o dãtin ɛl møs/
(an aunt other have-I)
'I have another aunt'

6. /tRɔo vat møs pRɛnɛt baR ʲe:R/
(things good have-I bought in-the town)
'I bought good things in town'

7. /pwan møs ba me benn/
(pain have-I in my head)
'I have a headache'

II. AdvVSO is found frequently, according to Varin, in TB; it is also common in CB. However, her claim that Bch prohibts this is misleading: standard Breton texts abound with examples and even Kervella (whom she often cites as a standard-bearer of Bch) allows adverbs to precede verbs (1974:393); heavy adverbials, however, are definitely frowned on in Bch.

As will be discussed later, such adverbials are in fact common in written forms of TB; I have found very few instances of them in spoken CB.

Examples of typical AdvVSO sequences in CB:

8. /gudəze hin da ge:R/
(after-that go-I'll to house)
'Afterwards I'll go home'

9. /bɛp ma:R skɤivon dɛj/
(each time-period write-I to her)
'I write to her from time to time'

10. /hio skɤivin tRi lizɛR/
(today write-I-will three letter)
'Today I'll write three letters'

11. /ispɛn vi o viš møz evəd ʃ̆ẅin ʃ̆ẅɛn/
(more for a time have-I drunk wine white)
'More than once I've drunk white wine'

12. /brømɛ hajñ Ryt de glask an al/
(now go-they route to look-for the other)
'Now they travel to look for another'

III. CompVS: here V is a form of bezañ 'be'. Varin's claim is that this is the usual order in Bch, and she implies that it is rare in TB, which prefers to use SVComp. However, CompVS is by no means rare in CB:

13. /Ryz mad e hɛ̃w̃/
(rude very is that-one)
'He's very rude'

14. /ɔ RɛmɛR e o putu/
(those is your shoes)
'Those are your shoes'

15. /ʃ̆in e/
(cold is)
'it's cold'

16. /tom e/
(warm is)
'it's warm'

17. /bRao e an amzɛR/ or /an amzɛR zo bRao/
(fine is the weather) (the weather is fine)

The final two categories (IV & V) are crucial to Varin's conclusions: here she states that SVO is used in Bch only for emphasis on the subject, while it is nonemphatic in TB; and that XSVO and SXVO sentences are totally unacceptable in Bch, whereas they frequently occur in TB. The CB data do contain instances of the latter word order, but not with sufficient frequency to justify calling it an unmarked order. Varin's own data are too sparse to provide any credible verification of her claim.

As far as simple SVO sentences are concerned, they are commonly heard in CB, as in TB, as Varin asserts. However, it is critical to point out that the SVO pattern is found almost exclusively in the analytic conjugation mode, consisting of Subj-V_{uninfl} (O). That is, a NP subject is used in this construction precisely because the verb is unmarked for person/number (the verb form used is identical with the 3rd sg. m. in inflected paradigms). E.g.,

18. /a mehɛt zo øRožɛt/
(The women is married)
'The women are married'

19. /a botRəd vytyn̥ varlɛx/
(The men smoke afterwards)

20. /a pezãtət na pwan hon o bwit/
(The peasants had pain earning their food)
'The peasants had difficulty earning a living'

21. /a lo:n sovaž̌ Ra dRuk da bezãtɛt/
(The animals wild make harm to peasants)
'The wild animals harm the peasants'

This construction may have arisen historically just to allow the option of focusing on the subject in a VSO language (cf. Le Roux 1957:469). Further, it is well known that VSO languages always allow SVO as an important alternative order (Greenberg 1963; Hawkins 1983) so that the presence of the latter order in Breton cannot ipso facto be taken as evidence of a shift to basic SVO order. Moreover, Breton is highly consistent in most of the operator/operand features associated with typologically VSO languages: e.g., it is NGen, NAdj, NDem, NRel, and it is Prepositional.[4] It is prudent to consider these features in their entirety rather than in isolation, for there are powerful typological correlations among them (as Hawkins 1983, for example, took great pains to establish). On might reasonably expect an ongoing shift in the order of S and V to be associated with a shift, or at least variation, in other major constituents, such as N and Adj or N and

[4] Topicalization can undoubtedly account for many of the SVO structures; topicalization, or topicality, in turn depends on discourse and pragmatic considerations that have not been explored here. It may well be, as Givón (1977) argues for Biblical Hebrew, that topic-shifting in a text (where the topic is the subject) strongly promotes the development of SV order. Steele (1975) also suggest this for another VSO language (Kapampangan) in which SVO figures as an alternate order. Clearly the differences among the authors/speakers in the frequencies of SV orderings in the Breton texts studied here point to the influence of different discourse strategies, but the matter remains to be explored. Moreover, a careful diachronic study, somewhat along the lines of Givón (1977), would need to be done before a convincing case for the drift from VSO to SVO in Breton could be established.

Dem.[5] On balance, then, it seems that Varin's case for SVO in TB is difficult to sustain in light of data from CB and from some of the typological considerations just outlined. Nevertheless, thinking it might be said that I have been comparing apples and oranges in juxtaposing data from a spoken dialect to the written texts of TB and Bch, I decided to investigate word order in a number or written texts, more akin to the sources used by Varin; however, I did not include any 19th century religious writing (the latter almost infamous for its French calquing practices). I selected passages from the works of four writers well known in Brittany, all of them Breton speakers from birth, all of working class origins, and all of whom did not, so far as I know, receive formal instruction in Breton (either as a medium or target of teaching), where the niceties of "pure" Breton syntax might have been set forth. Whether or not editors have "cleaned up" original versions I cannot of course know for sure, but I do know that these writers are admired for their literary authenticity that stems from their closeness to traditional Breton culture. All were born at around the turn of the century, and all but one of the works excerpted from are autobiographical/family-historical in nature.

A fifth work examined is a folktale transcribed from an oral recitation by an older Breton man living near Carhaix; thus, although written and clearly tidied up some as a result, it is very close in its morphosyntax and lexicon to the Breton I work with.

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[5] This argument is, admittedly, not overwhelming in the case of a proposed shift to SVO, since that order is also found with NGen, NAdj, NRel and prepositions, as well as with GenN and AdjN. As Hawkins (1983) argues, SVO is not strongly correlated with or predictive of other constituent orders.

The writers and storyteller, in alphabetical order are: Anjela Duval, Yeun ar Gow, Hervé Herri, Jarl Priel, and J.L. Rolland.[6] I examined swatches of text of approximately equal length from each work (220-272 clauses each), plotting the frequencies of occurrence of each of the word orders that appear on Table 2A. Table 2B shows the frequencies of the various word orders in CB.

[insert Tables 2A and 2B here]

Several things emerge from a perusal of these tables:

1) Verb-initial clauses (this means either absolute initial or preceded only by a verbal particle) constitute a minority of clauses, albeit an important one (19.1%). In these data they consist chiefly of clauses beginning with a past participle, of embedded clauses, of imperatives, or of the verb emañ or so-called "emphatic" sentences beginning with Bez' (a shortened form of the verbal noun 'be'). However, the adjacent category, XVSO, which consists of verbs preceded only by a conjunction or a negative marker in main clauses (by a conjunction in embedded clauses) shows a higher incidence of 26.8%; for most analysts, this category would still have verb-first status, and does not weaken a VSO interpretation. Adding these two columns together, it can be seen that they account for 45.9% of the clauses; imperatives add another 5%.

[6] The works examined are: Tad-Kozh Roperz Huon (1980); E Skeud Tour bras Sant Jermen (1978); Evel-se e oamp (1980); Va zammig buhez (1975); "Ar vouaih aour" (Brud Nevez, 1985).

2) YVS(O) is an important clause type for all of the writers. Y is generally an adverbial, often multiple, or a participial phrase before the verb.[7] A few examples (the Y portions are underlined):

22. E-pad seizh vloaz e chomas ma zad-kozh e Verdun
(during seven years prt. stayed my grandfather in Verdun)
'My grandfather lived for seven years at Verdun' [Y. ar Gow, p. 9]

23. Evel an holl, pe dost, am boa daou dad-kozh evel just
(like the everyone or close had-I two grandfather as equitable)
'Like everyone, or nearly, I had two grandfathers of course' (Duval, p. 13)

24. Peurechu gantañ e amzer, e teuas a-benn ar fin d'ar gêr
(finished with-him his time v.prt. came-he at the end to the house)
'His time completed, he finally came home' (Priel, p. 9)

25. Hogen biskoazh em buhez n'am eus klevet digant he fried
(almost never in-my life not-have-I heard from her spouse)
nemet ur ger galleg
(except a word French)
'I almost never in my life heard from her husband anything but a word of French' (Priel, p. 8)

Unlike most of Varin's examples of sentences with heavy adverbials, the VS(O) ordering remains following the opening structures (which have focus, contrast, and other staging functions); and the verbal particle is e rather than a (again, unlike Varin's SXVO and XSVO sentences, with a, which she claims shows that the preceding materials are to be interpreted parenthetically). Such structures are, in general, more characteristic of written texts than of

[7] Varin claims that "it is one of the rules of Bch that only one element can precede the finite verb" (p. 91). She cites some ponderous sentences from TB that violate this rule; such constructions occur but are not characteristic of the writers studied here; however, the one-element rule certainly does not hold for them.

spoken language (they are fairly rare in the folktale and in my CB transcriptions); in any event, as regards the relative order of the verb and its primary terms, they are basically VS(O) sentences.

3) Periphrastic constructions turned up less often than I had anticipated (comprising 5% of the clause types), but they vary in frequency by author. This is the construction consisting of verbal noun + ober (inflected). As noted in my earlier discussion, it allows a DO or adverbial to be inserted between the verbal noun and the verb. Again, authors/speakers vary in their tendency to insert materials; in the CB data (see Table 2B) only adverbs are found between the verbal noun and ober. Of the writers investigated, Jarl Priel is the most periphrastic-prone (such constructions accounting for 11.8% of his clauses, as compared with a range of 2.6-4.7% for the other authors (and 10.9% in CB). Priel, too, more than other writers, used pheriphrastic constructions in the second half of conjoined clauses (where they may follow a coordinating conjunction) or after an adverbial (proscribed in Bch). Some of these patterns are shown in 26-30 (the periphrastic constructions are underlined):

26. Gounit douar a rae he fried...
(cultivate land v.prt. did-he her spouse)
'Her husband tilled the soil...' [Priel, p. 19]

27. Koll poan hag amzer a rae...
(lose effort and time prt. did-she)
'She lost [wasted] time and effort...' [ibid., p. 65]

28. ...jilgammat war an daou du a rae ar paour kaezh...
(limp on the two side prt. did-he the poor miserable one)
'...the poor thing limped on both sides' [ibid., 28]

29. War lavar holl e-dro din, tennañ a ran dezhi...

(on word all around to-me resemble prt. do-I to her)
'According to everyone around me, I resemble her...' (ibid., p. 12]

30. Kollet he devoa ar gwele ha mezevenniñ a rae...
(lost she-had the sight and become intoxicated prt. did-she)
'She had lost her sight, and became intoxicated...' [ibid., p. 13]

Assuming for present purposes (as Varin does) that periphrastic constructions may be interpreted as verb-initial clauses, the incidence of such clauses rises, after adding them to the first three columns, to 69.2% of the total.[8]

Next we come to SVO order, which is found in all the texts, with, again, varying frequencies. The Duval text manifested the highest incidence (30.5%) and Priel the lowest (10%). The CB corpus showed 22.6%. It should be noted that about 24% of SVO constructions were found in the analytical conjugation mode, and most of the remainder (64.1%) with affirmative or negative inflected verbs (where the subject NP was clearly used for contrast or emphasis. Note that SVO sequences are very rarely found in anything but

[8] The Breton infinitive, or verbal noun, as it is usually called, exhibits a number of nominal properties, not unlike the English gerund--e.g., it can be preceded by articles or possessive adjectives; it can be the object of a preposition; it can function as a clause subject or DO. This has prompted Anderson (1981), and perhaps others, to classify the entire construction as a "verbal NP". Nevertheless, the verbal noun retains significant verbal attributes, among which are its capacity to be modified by adverbials (never adjectives) and, if transitive, to take a DO, as shown in examples 26-27. (But of relevance and interest in this connection is Willis' argument (1986) that the Welsh verbal noun, even in its apparently "verbiest" manifestations, is still best analyzable as a noun rather than a verb.)

main, declarative clauses (and in passives), unlike the VS(O), XVS(O) and YVS(O) patterns that occur in various embedded clauses.[9]

5) XSVO provided sparse examples in all texts, showing an overall incidence of 2%, with a range of 0.3-2.5% among the authors; like SVO, it rarely occurred in embeddings.

6) Comp V(S) sequences were mildly popular in the texts (accounting for 6.2% of the sample clauses). Comp typically consists of Adj(Adv.) or N followed by a form of the verb bezañ 'be' (as in the CB examples discussed earlier); some Comps are more complicated. A few examples:

31. Kreñv 'oa ar veleien d'ar mare-amzer-se)
(strong was the priests at-the moment-time-that)
'The priests were strong at that time' [Duval, p. 15]

32. Disheñvel-tre e oa ar maendreserezh diouzh al lizherennañ
(Unlike-very v.prt. was the lithography from the lettering)
'Lithography was very different from lettering' [Herri, p. 19]

33. Ur spered kurius a zen e oa ivez ma zad
(A spirit curious of person v.prt. was also my father)
'My father was also a curious sort of person' [ar Gow, p. 49]

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[9] Some might see this as evidence for basic VSO word order, on the argument that embedded clauses are more conservative than main ones; but the argument can be turned around in that a different order in main clauses could be used as evidence of language change, since main clauses are more flexible and more open to innovation and "expressivity" than are subordinate ones (Mallinson & Blake 1981:402; cf. also Schwartz 1972). And Givón (1977) would claim (for Biblical Hebrew at least) that in main clauses the topicality of the subject is higher, which promotes SV (as opposed to the VS of low-topicality subordinate clauses). However, the evidence that I am mounting for Breton does not corroborate the claim of an accomplished shift to SVO, for SVO is largely restricted to main affirmative clauses, and even there it is not the dominant word order, though it is, granted, an important one (cf. n. 4).

This word order is perfectly acceptable in any kind of Breton, though its frequency is arguably less in spoken than in written forms of the language. Its presence does not add any particular force to the claim that Breton is SVO inasmuch as VS ordering is still preserved (a DO is, of course, not possible in such sentences).

7) Finally, OVS is a minor word order pattern in all of the texts (as in the CB data); it is most often found when the verb is en devout 'have', but is not restricted to this verb. Its function is clearly to focus attention on the object (usually a full NP, though it may be pronominal, as in imperatives--ya digerezit 'Excuse me!' [lit., me excuse-you]; no such examples happen to have occurred in the sample texts.) Illustrating OVS are sentences 34-38 (note that S is usually only inflectionally marked on the V or Aux):[10]

34. An eurvad en devoe ma zad-kozh da...
(The happiness he-had my grandfather to)
'My grandfather had the good fortune to... [ar Gow, p. 10]

35. Nag a draoù kurius he dije gwelet...
(How-many of things curious she-would-have seen)
'How many curious things she would have seen...) [Duval, p. 95]

36. Nebeut a dra a lavarin diwar he fenn...
(Few of thing prt. say-I-will about her head)
'I'll say little about her...' [Priel, p. 12]

[10] Historically the verb en devout (or kaout) 'have' developed from a personal pronoun prefixed to a 3sg. form of the verb bezañ 'be'; in this sense the "subject" precedes the verb, though native speakers are unlikely to be aware of the composition of the verb forms (cf. Le Roux 1957:182). In most spoken varieties of the language the distinct forms of 'have' are most effectively analyzed as independent morphemes: /møs/ 'I-have', /pøs/ 'you-have', /nøs/ 'she/he-has', etc.

37. Va seizh gwellañ a ris a-hed ar bloaz evit...
(my seven best prt. did-I during the year for)
'I did my very best during the year to...' [ibid, p. 38]

38. Amzer am eus bet da brederiañ abaoe pevar miz...
(time I-have had to reflect since four month)
'I had time to reflect for four months...' [Herri, p. 66]

Conclusions.

The weight of evidence I have presented clearly does not support a reinterpretation of TB as an SVO language. That its syntax is more flexible than that of Bch is not in question, which entails, in part, a higher incidence in TB than in Bch of the SVO alternative order and of heavy adverbial structures of the YVS(O) type. Typologically modern Breton is (or remains) a consistent VSO language, possessing the principal operator/operand features posited for such languages, as mentioned earlier. There are of course theoretical motivations within some approaches to linguistic analysis for positing another underlying order, but the surface facts remain.

Where Breton syntax may go in the future is another question. All of the data analyzed for this paper represent language use by native speakers of the language, many of whose parents were monolingual in Breton or for whom Breton was by far the stronger of two languages. That generation is now elderly, and it has not been replaced by any growing up under similar linguistic circumstances. In other words, most contemporary, younger speakers/writers of the language (and all future ones) have learned (or will have learned) Breton as a second language, following the acquisition of French. Such people will likely follow one of two paths: either they will consciously adopt the rules of the more conservative, Celticist writers (the

Bch route) or they will follow their largely francophone instincts in expressing themselves in Breton, which could easily mean a rise in the frequency of SVO ordering (as well as a host of other morphosyntactic changes that could radically alter the shape of the language). A third possibility, of course, is neither of the above--i.e., the language dies out, which is more than a remote possibility; but that is a matter which goes far beyond the scope of this paper.

Table 1. Comparison of Varin's statements (1979) about word order in "Brezhoneg chimik" (Bch) and "Traditional Breton" (TB) with data from a spoken variety (CB).

Word Order (A-J Basically VSO in Bch)	Bch	TB	CB
A. In Negative	NegVSO (SNegVO--"marked for emphasis")	SVO/SVC	(Neg) VSO (SNegVO marked for emph. as in Bch)
B. In cmpd. tenses	VSO (the only possibility)	VSO (also permits unmarked SVO)	VSO (no exs. of SVO)
C. Periphrastic Constr.	VSO (V=verbal noun + ober [inflected]; S & O are full NPs	The Bch order is "ungrammatical in TB", due to the presence of the NP subj. Only possible sequences: v.n.+ober+O or v.n.+O+ober	(CB data consonant with TB)
D. Emphatic Constrs. w/bez'	Bez' + V	(no comment, but presumably OK)	Bit + V
E. Reported Speech	...VSO	TB prefers to begin the reported clause with the subj.	...conj. V(S)(O) (conj. = /la(R)/)
F. Rel. Clauses	VSO	VSO	VSO
G. After subord. conjunctions	VSO	(no comment, presumably VSO)	VSO
After coord. conjuctions	XV... (where X may be the subj.)	(presumably XV...)	XV...
H. Emañ	VS	VS	VS
I. Emphatic Constrs. wo/bez'	VS ("rare")	(presumably VS)	VS (rare)
J. Imperatives	V	V	V(O)

Table 1 (cont'd.)

"Other Word Orders"	Bch	TB	CB
I. OVS	yes (marked for emphasis)	yes (same comment)	yes (same comment)
II. AdvVSO	no	yes	yes
III. CompVS	usual order	not usual; TB prefers SVC (e.g., an amzer 'zo brav)	of moderate frequency; also uses SVC.
IV. SVO	used to emphasize subject	nonemphatic	nonemphatic in the analytic conjugation; emphatic when the V is inflected.
V. XSVO and SXVO	ungrammatical "	occurs frequently " "	XSVO common in the analytic conjugation; SXVO rare.

Table 2A. Word Order Distributions & Frequencies in Five Written Texts

	VSO	XVSO*	YVSO*	Peri.	SVO	XSVO	CompV	OVS	TOTAL
SD-I	107	50	171	60	119	15	75	40	637
SD-A	2	0	0	0	55	3	0	0	60
SD-Neg	8	90	35	0	29	4	1	0	167
WHQ-Aff	0	0	4	0	3	0	0	7	14
WHQ-Neg	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Yes-No	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	4
EC-Aff	108	145	7	0	2	2	1	0	265
EC-Neg	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	28
EQ-Aff	0	9	8	0	4	0	0	0	21
EQ-Neg	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Imper.	5	4	0	0	3	1	0	0	13
Pass.	6	3	1	0	14	0	0	0	24
TOTALS	236	331	226	62	231	25	77	47	1235
PERCENTS	19.1	26.8	18.3	5.0	18.7	2.0	6.2	3.8	
		69.2			**20.7**				

Non-obvious Abbreviations:

SD = Simple Declarative; I = Inflectional; A = Analytical
EC - Embedded Clause
EQ = Embedded Question
Peri. = Periphrastic Construction (verbal noun + ober)

* X = negative marker or conjunction; Y = other preverbal element(s).

Table 2B. Word Order Distributions and Frequencies in a Spoken Variety of Breton (CB)

	VSO	XVSO	YVSO	Peri.	SVO	XSVO	CompV	OVS	TOTALS
SD-I	22	5	37	37	17	8	17	16	159
SD-A	0	0	0	0	37	1	0	0	38
SD-Neg	21	10	3	0	9	1	1	0	45
WHQ-Aff	0	12	2	0	5	0	1	11	31
WHQ-Neg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yes-No	1	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	13
EC-Aff	42	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	47
EC-Neg	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
EQ-Aff	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
EQ-Neg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Imper.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pass.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	45	83	44	37	71	10	22	27	339
PERCENTS	13.3	24.5	13.0	10.9	20.9	2.9	6.5	8.0	
	‖	**61.7**		‖	**23.8**	‖			

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